



# How to Become Endorsed



# How to become endorsed in the Compassionate Shopping Guide

*In 2023, Ethical Consumer rated the Compassionate Shopping Guide as the best for “scope” in their review of cruelty-free endorsement schemes.*

Joining the Compassionate Shopping Guide shows your customers that you really mean it when you say you’re cruelty-free.

If that weren’t reason enough to apply, it’s also free for companies to join the guide.

So, what are you waiting for? Read on to find out everything you need to know about becoming endorsed!

*Donna & Wenna*

Compassionate Shopping Guide

ethical  
consumer  
Awarded Best in Scope



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# Who we are



## Compassionate Shopping Guide

The Compassionate Shopping Guide has been produced by the animal welfare charity, Naturewatch Foundation, since 1993.

It's our mission is to make the world a kinder, safer place for all animals. As part of that commitment, we're passionate about helping shoppers find personal care and household brands that are truly cruelty-free.

# What makes us different?

The Compassionate Shopping Guide was the first of its kind in the UK, and we continue to highlight today why it's so important to understand the policies behind the products.

We love helping shoppers make informed choices and support companies that have committed to being completely cruelty-free throughout their whole supply chain. This means we only endorse brands and companies with zero ties to animal testing.

# Why become endorsed? The benefits for your company

## **No Cost**

There's no fee to become endorsed with us. All we need you to do is complete an application form.

## **Promotion**

Our comprehensive endorsement is a meaningful way of showing your customers how much you care about being part of a cruelty-free future. We love it when companies display our cruelty-free logo on their website and products.

## **Connection**

Joining our ever-growing community of endorsed brands will instantly connect you to the thousands of cruelty-free shoppers that use our guide.

## **Sharing**

As one of our endorsed brands, you will have a platform to share special offers and updates that can be promoted on our website and social media channels.

## **Policy Support**

Whether you're looking to refresh your current cruelty-free policy or you're just getting started, you'll receive clear, personalised help from our friendly team.

# Our endorsement criteria

Hopefully we've convinced you to join the Compassionate Shopping Guide, so now we'll take you through our all-important criteria for becoming endorsed!

## Our endorsement criteria at-a-glance:

### **Companies endorsed by Naturewatch Foundation will:**

- 1.** Have a Fixed Cut-Off Date for animal testing;
- 2.** Not be owned by a parent company or be part of a subsidiary that tests on animals;
- 3.** Not export to countries where their products require mandatory testing on animals; and,
- 4.** Not manufacture or sell other products, such as medicines, that are tested on animals.

# Our endorsement criteria

## 1. Fixed Cut-Off Date (FCOD)

All companies that are endorsed by the Compassionate Shopping Guide commit to a Fixed Cut-Off Date (FCOD) animal testing policy.

Sadly, virtually all ingredients have been tested on animals in the past, and many countries continue to test new ingredients. But, by adopting an FCOD policy, you and your suppliers agree that you won't use any ingredients tested on animals after that fixed date. In doing so, you strengthen your cruelty-free credentials and demonstrate you're committed to your ethical values.

Take a look at page 10 below for more information about FCODs and how to put one in place if you do not yet have one. We're on hand to support you through the process if you need us.

# Our endorsement criteria

## **2. Parent Companies and subsidiaries**

Companies endorsed in the Compassionate Shopping Guide are cruelty-free throughout their entire company structure.

This means that if you're owned by a parent company, we'll need them to complete our endorsement application form and confirm the animal testing policy for all their brands. If you have a parent company and want to become endorsed, please speak to them now and ask them to get in touch with us.

## **3. Exporting to countries where animal testing is mandatory**

If your products are sold in China, where animal testing is sometimes still required, we'll ask you to confirm how you do this whilst remaining cruelty-free.

For instance, you might sell in China via e-commerce only or you might have Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certificates that allow you to sell General Use Cosmetics in China without animal tests.

# Our endorsement criteria

## 4. Medicinal products

As medicinal products\* go through animal testing, if you, or your parent organisation sells pharmaceutical products, unfortunately you will not be eligible for endorsement in the Compassionate Shopping Guide.

If you sell food supplements, homeopathic medicinal products, traditional herbal medicinal products or herbal medicinal products we will ask you to confirm whether your Fixed Cut-Off Date applies to these products, too. If it does not, unfortunately you will not be eligible for endorsement in the Compassionate Shopping Guide at this time.

\*These are products that meet the definition of 'medicinal products' under Regulation 2 of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012.

# How to apply to become endorsed in three easy steps

Applying to become endorsed is easy and it doesn't cost a thing! Simply complete the application form on our website to confirm you meet our endorsement criteria. If you have any questions, contact us at [compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org](mailto:compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org).

If you're owned by a parent company, they will need to complete the endorsement application, so please share this information with them and ask them to apply on behalf of all their brands.

## **1. Have your information to hand**

During your application, we'll ask for the following information, and we recommend getting this ready before you start:

- Your company details;
- Your Fixed Cut-Off Date (FCOD) and information about how you monitor your suppliers;
- Information about where your products are sold;
- If you sell in China, information about how you avoid animal testing, including copies of any Good Manufacturing Practice certificates if you have them; and,
- Your brand details and what product types you sell.

# How to apply to become endorsed in three easy steps

## 2. Complete the application

You can complete the application form online [here](#). Once you've submitted your form, a member of our team will assess your application. If we have any follow-up questions, we'll contact you using the policy contact email address in your application.

Once we have all of the information we need, we'll confirm your endorsement and add you to our guide! We'll also send you copies of our logo to use on your website and products, along with other useful information to help you get the most out of your endorsement.

## 3. Keeping your endorsement up to date

We'll check in with you every three years to ask you to renew your endorsement, which involves re-confirming your FCOD and how you monitor suppliers.

If there're any changes that might affect your endorsement in the meantime, please let us know as soon as possible by emailing [compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org](mailto:compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org).

# What is a Fixed Cut-Off Date?

All of the companies in the Compassionate Shopping Guide commit to a fixed cut-off date (FCOD). If you don't have one in place yet, don't worry, because we'll talk you through how to implement one below.

The Fixed Cut-Off Date (FCOD) animal testing policy is recognised as the benchmark for cruelty-free cosmetics, personal care and household products. Companies that have an FCOD policy don't use any ingredients tested on animals after their chosen FCOD and they ensure that their suppliers comply with this, too.

For example, if a company's FCOD is 21/08/2008, they won't use any ingredients in their products that have been tested on animals after that date.

All companies that are endorsed in the Compassionate Shopping Guide commit to not conduct, commission or be party to any animal tests for finished products after their fixed cut-off date (FCOD). They also commit to not use any newly developed ingredients that have been subject to animal testing after the chosen date.

Your Fixed Cut-Off Date is fixed and cannot be changed. To ensure your suppliers are compliant with this, once your FCOD is set up you should set-up a monitoring system to make sure that no animal testing is taking place in your supply chain.

# How to implement a Fixed-Cut-Off Date (FCOD) policy

## STEP 1

Contact your suppliers and ask if they already operate a FCOD – many suppliers do!

If all your suppliers operate a FCOD, you're home and dry, as all you need to do is use the most recent date as your FCOD and you can skip to step 3. If your suppliers don't operate a FCOD, it's still possible to adopt one. Continue to step 2.

## STEP 2

Choose from one of the following options:

1. Ask each of your suppliers to look at the ingredients they supply to your company and inform you of the most recent date that one of them was subject to animal testing. The most recent date supplied would become your FCOD.
2. Speak with your suppliers. Ask them to nominate a date that they can comply with to be your FCOD when they supply your ingredients. If you use more than one supplier, the most recent date given by your suppliers will be your FCOD.

# How to implement a Fixed-Cut-Off Date (FCOD) policy

## Step 2 continued...

3. Adopt the date of the last known animal test - you may find this information on the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) supplied for each ingredient used in your product.

Once you have agreed your FCOD with your supplier/s, continue onto step 3.

## STEP 3

To commit to your FCOD, you should now formalise it with your suppliers. You can do this in one of two ways:

1. Use a 'Supplier Declaration of Assurance' document. A link to an example document is included at the end of this pack. This document should be sent to your suppliers to sign and send back to you. The document can then be held in your files.
2. Alternatively, include or add a section to your supplier contract about your FCOD requirement.

Once you have an FCOD in place and you have written proof on file, you're ready for step 4!

# How to implement a Fixed-Cut-Off Date (FCOD) policy

## STEP 4

You should now set up a monitoring system to make sure your suppliers continue to adhere to your FCOD. It's your responsibility to make sure your suppliers are complying with your policy and we recommend renewing your 'Supplier Declaration of Assurance' on an annual basis. This way, everyone stays informed about your requirement for ingredients that comply with your FCOD.

We'll contact you every three years to reconfirm your FCOD and how you regulate your suppliers.

**If you have any questions about Fixed Cut-Off Dates, contact us at [compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org](mailto:compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org).**

# Annex A: Supplier Declaration of Assurance - Template

Company Details	
Supplier Company Name	
Company Address	
Email	
Phone	
Website	
Contact Person	
Position held	

**Declaration of Assurance**

We, the undersigned, declare that we will not conduct or fund any animal tests on cosmetic and/or household products, ingredients, and formulae.

We will monitor testing history of all ingredients to ensure that we do not supply *(insert your Company name here)* with any cosmetic and/or household products, ingredients and formulae which have been tested on animals since their fixed cut-off date of *(insert date here)*.

We will provide *(insert your Company name here)* with raw material certificates, or the equivalent, to support our Declaration of Assurance.

Supplier's name & position within company \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supplier's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Please use this as a template. We understand that all companies and suppliers work differently so you may wish to adapt this to make it relevant for you.)

Template here



# Good luck with your endorsement!

Visit [compassionateshoppingguide.org](https://compassionateshoppingguide.org) or reach out to us at [compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org](mailto:compassionateshopping@naturewatch.org) to learn more.

Discover our other work for animals at [naturewatch.org](https://naturewatch.org).

